

THE GOLDEN LEGEND.

We take from the Missouri Republican the following translation of "The Golden Legend of Poor Henry," made for that paper by A. E. Kroeger. The poem, which will be interesting, independently of its own merits, as the basis of Mr. Longfellow's "Golden Legend," was written by Hartmann von der Aue, a Saxon poet, about the year 1200. It is highly esteemed in Germany, but has never before been rendered into English. This is a translation of the first part of the poem, and it will give an excellent idea of its style:

A learned Knight there lived of old, Who all that in the books is told, To read quite readily could claim. Sir Hartmann for this was his name— At one in feudal service lived, Great was the pleasure he received From various books and reading. Then he began heeding Whether he might not levy On some tale, wherewith heavy And dark hours sweet to render. And of such a gender As to God's honor to redound, Whilst also making men around Pleased with his endeavor. He now begins to favor Von with the tale which he found writ. There lived a Knight in Saxia land, In whom those virtues to expand, Had not forgotten been forsooth. Which every noble knight and youth Should possess in his own praise, Of none spoke men so well as ways. O'er all the region of those lands, He had ready in his hands Mickle wealth and noble blood. His virtue, too, e'er ready stood. Yet splendid as his riches were, His birth unchangeable and rare. Equal to princes in degree; Yet so rich never was he In birth, or wealth, or station, And in virtuous inclination. His name was known and spread by fame, Sir Henry he was called by name. This Knight he was of Aue born, And his heart had quite forsworn Falsity and wicked mood; This oath he kept through bad and good, Till his end e'er steady. To do good always ready Stood his life and honor even. A ready knack to him was given, For worldly honors and noblesse. These he knew well how to increase, With all kinds of virtues fair. He was of youth a flower rare, Of worldly love a mirror-light, Of steady faith a diamond bright, A crown of courteous bearing. To the needy help appearing. To his friends a shield forever. A scale of mildness, never Over or underweighing, "Labor," ran his saying, "Is honoring burden to the wise." Moreover, he sang well of love; And thus enabled was to move By skill the world's applause and praise. He was comely and wise always. Whilst this Sir Henry was employed, And life every day enjoyed His honor, fame, and his health Joyfully and full of health, And with worldly pleasure; Above all kin in treasure And in honor and praise eke; His proud life was turned to meek. And humblest life man ever led In him was then exhibited, As once in Absalon 'twas shown, That the too resplendent crown Of worldly honor galleth And under feet his worthiness From its highest worthiness. As the Holy Bible says Truthfully: In world's sumus Media vita, which reads thus:— That in death we deeply die. When most sure we think to live, Yea, what this world firmest holds, Steadiest and best enfold, With greatest power encompasses Stands tottering and has no base. This well the candle illustrates And in a subtle image states, Since it has turned to ashes even The while it birth to light has given. We are creatures weak and frail. Look how our laughter turns to wail And mingles e'er with weeping. Our sweetness life is stepping E'er in the most bitter gall. Our bloom must ever fall. When it wears its brightest green. Thus in poor Henry's case was seen That who in highest happiness Upon earth his life doth pass Appears but humble unto God. Hence God struck him with his rod, And threw him from his worthy place. He cast him into great disgrace; Leprosy took hold of him. Now when thus in every limb The heavy scourge of God was plain To man and woman, he grew then Disgusting and unbearable. Now heed: how e'er agreeable He to the world did once appear So little of it now stayed near. That no one liked on him to look, Like Job, his friends him now forsook— Job, who had also lived in cheer, But who, when misery drew near, From his high throne of riches on A wretched couch of dung was thrown. Thus our poor Sir Henry, lo! For the first time learned to know, That he unto the world appeared E'en like all other lepers, feared And spurned; yet this wide gap rose Between his suffering and Job's woes. That Job, though suffering madly Bore quite patiently, sadly. The sore affliction on him thrown, By his soul's fortitude alone, His most loathsome sickness, And the world's great weakness. Hence praised Job God, though sore distressed, But our fair knight was not so blessed; And never so e'er came his grame, He rather joyless and sad became; His weary heart drooped wounded now; His swimming eye sank drowned now; His head, high airs they vanished all— His turned to bitter gall, And gloomy thunderstroke

His bright and cheerful noonday broke. A threatening cloud in quick advance O'ershadowed all his sunny glances. In those sad hours he gan to grieve That all ungathered he must leave So many hours gleaming. Often he cursed, thus dreaming, The leafless hour and day forlorn. When he into the world was born. Yet somewhat he again rejoiced, And by one comfort was enticed, When some friends to him betrayed That the sickness on him laid Would in quite different forms advance, And even might be cured perchance. Hence he began to think and dream, And of hope to catch a gleam; Believing he might cured be, And he went quite easily. Thus he went and took the road, As the doctors him had showed, Towards Monspassiere; But there he found little cheer Or comfort for his ill to dwell— They told him he would ne'er be well. He heard this with little joy, Then he saterna thought to try; There, through her learned doctors' lore, He cured of the disease he bore. He found her wisest masters there, Who to him at once this rare And strangest story did relate: That he would be cured, and yet That cured he could be ne'ermore. "How can this be?" he cried, heart-sore: "What you say cannot be! for sure, Either there is or not a cure. Since what you say may impose on me, Of wealth or labor surely, I shall perform most truly." "Now leave these hopes unrejoiced," To him the master then rejoined, "Your sickness is of such a kind— But why should I let you know? There is a medicine, I trow, Which would quickly cure you; But no one, I assure you, Has wealth enough, or courage e'en To obtain this medicine. Hence you'll keep your disease, unless God be your doctor in your distress. Then spoke Sir Henry, the poor knight, "Why rob me of all comforts, light? Sure I've enough of riches' store— Unless your mastership and lore And office you would forsake, And moreover, forsaken Both my silver and my gold— To get upon you such a hold That you will gladly make me well." "That I've the will I need not tell," Said the master in return, "And if the drug were but a sort Such as to be found readily, Or purchasable in Leipzig, I'd never let you perish. But this is not the case, alas! And hence my help by you must pass. Sore as with pain you're laden, You must find a maiden Pure and of a virgin blood, And yet all willing, and inclined For you death to suffer. Now, thus life to offer Is not the custom amongst men, Else nothing more were needed then. Such a virgin maiden's blood Would make your body clean and good." Then recognized poor Henry how 'Twould be impossible now To find one, ready to offer For his death to suffer. Hence was that comfort taken from him, Which had brought him hope grew dim, And ever since that time he thought Of his cure no more, and sought To give no more attention. And now his grief's expansion Grew so strong and so great, That he began to curse his fate, And wished his life were ended. Home went he, and expended The wealth wherewith he had been blessed, As to him appeared best. Quietly he then gave each Of his poor friends to make rich And the stranger poor to endow. More or that God might mercy show Into his soul, of hope bereft, He gave to churches what was left. This did he of all his self Quietly divest himself, And kept a quiet life alone, There from men retired to moan. Yet his pitiful misery Not alone mourned he; 'Twas mourned by men in the whole land Wherein he was acquainted, and Even in those countries where, unknown, They'd heard of him through fame alone.

THE OPERA IN ENGLAND. A writer in the St. James Magazine, in discussing the past, present, and future of opera in England, gives the following rapid summary of the works that now hold the stage in that country:— The Operatic Stage of the present day is occupied almost exclusively by the works of some half-dozen composers. Beethoven's "Fidelio" is performed once or twice in a season, or not so often. Weber's "Oberon," and "Der Freischutz," are heard now and then, his "Eury-anthe" never. Gounod has written some six or eight operas, and of them "Faust" has achieved popularity. Schubert's music is never performed at all. Spohr has written the following works amongst others:—"Azor and Zennire," "Owl Queen," "The Crusaders," "The Alchemist," "Jessonia," "Pietro von Abano," and "Faust." None of them have been given in London this many a year. Auber has composed operas without number; the following are amongst his best:—"Mansueto," "Fra Diavolo," the "Crown Diamonds," "Gustavus III.," "Lestocq," and "Le premier jour du bonheur." Out of these half-dozen, "Mansueto" has been repeatedly, "Fra Diavolo" sometimes, performed. The "Crown Diamonds" has occasionally been given in a mutilated shape by an English company. The rest are strangers to us. Rossini, who wrote "La Barbiere de Seville," "William Tell," "La Gazza Ladra," "Semiramide," "La Donna del Lago," "Tancredi," "Le Siego de Corinto," "Riccardo e Zoraide," "L'Italiani in Algeria," and "Eureo in Italia," besides others which it would be tedious to name, is represented by the "Barbiere" alone. "Guillaume Tell" in an incomplete form is given occasionally. "Semiramide," and "La Gazza Ladra" are heard at intervals. Mozart, on the whole, is luckier out of six works, "Don Juan," "Il flauto magico," "Le Marriage de Figaro," "Il Seraglio," "La Clemenza di Tito," and "Così fan tutti," three are tolerably well known in this country. Cherubini's fine opera "Medea," reckoned by Beethoven the grandest dramatic composition in the world, seems a drug in the market. Verdi, out of compositions innumerable, is known by his "Trovatore" and "Traviata." "Un ballo in Maschera" is run on periodically when a more popular work has to be withdrawn. "Don Carlos," his story extends beyond all

doubt, failed to please. "Rigoletto" has not been tolerably performed in London for many years, Bellini wrote "Norma," "La Sonnambula," "I Puritani," "Romeo e Giulietta," otherwise known as "Montecchi e Capuletti," and "Il Pirata." The first three works are given repeatedly, the other two not at all. Donizetti wrote at least fifty operas, and is represented by "Lucia," "Lucrèce," "Don Pasquale," "L'elisir d'amore," "La Favorita," and "Linda di Chamouni." Meyerbeer's "Huguenots" is popular, his "Le Prophete" is moderately so, his "L'Africano" seems pretty well forgotten, his "Stella del Nord" is reproduced at long intervals, his "Dinorah" has been revived with success lately, his "Robert le Diable" is given now and then; as for the rest of his operas, his "Margherita d'Anjou," and so forth, so far as the English public is concerned, they might never have been written. Gluck's "Iphigenia in Tauris" was given a year or two ago; his other compositions are forbidden fruit. Herold and Bellini have dropped out of remembrance. Balfe, a prolific writer, is known by his "Bohemian Girl" and "Rose of Castille," which are played in the provinces. Wallace, amongst other works, has produced "Lurline," the "Amber Witch," and "Maritana"; the first and the last of these are the ones by which he is familiar to the public. Macfarren has written "Robin Hood," "Don Quixote," "Charles II.," "Helyvellyn," and "She Stoops to Conquer." With how many of these, we may ask, is the average reader acquainted at all? Wagner has embodied his peculiar theories in "Tannhauser," "Lohengrin," the "Flying Dutchman," "Tristan and Isolde," the "Meistersinger of Nuremberg," "Rheingold," and in a minor degree in "Rienzi." No London manager has yet seen fit to allow any of these compositions a hearing. Flotow's "Martha" is liked, his "Stradella" not at all. Ambrose Thomas has met with a kind of success in "Hamlet," he will meet with another success of the same sort in "Mignon." Beyond the writers we have named there are a host of others whose names are not even known on this side of the channel. Many of them, however, have produced works whose success has been unequivocal and lasting.

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IMPERIAL FIRE INSURANCE CO. LONDON. ESTABLISHED 1803. Paid-up Capital and Accumulated Funds, \$8,000,000 IN GOLD. PREVOST & HERRING, Agents, 241 No. 107 S. THIRD Street, Philadelphia. CHAS. M. PREVOST, CEAS. P. HERRING